



Catfish Production

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Water Surface Acres down 5 Percent

The water surface area to be used for catfish production in the three major producing States (Alabama, Arkansas, and Mississippi) during July 1 through December 31, 2020, totaled 54,800 acres, down 5 percent from a year ago. Acres used for foodsize fish totaled 43,500, down 6 percent from the same time period in 2019. Acres used for fingerling production at 6,620 acres are down 11 percent, and acres for broodfish at 1,525 acres are down 12 percent. Of the total acres in production, 2,060 were scheduled to be renovated from July 1, 2020, to December 31, 2020, while acres taken out of production during the January 1, 2020, through June 30, 2020, period totaled 1,595 acres.

Foodsize Inventory down 5 Percent

Catfish operations in the three major producing States had 106 million foodsize fish on hand on July 1, 2020, down 5 percent from July 1, 2019. The breakouts of foodsize fish inventory numbers on July 1, 2020, with their respective percent change from the previous year were: large foodsize, 2.49 million fish, up 3 percent; medium foodsize, 26.3 million fish, down 15 percent; and small foodsize, 76.7 million fish, down 1 percent. The three major States also had 515,000 broodfish on hand on July 1, 2020, down 29 percent from last year's 730 thousand broodfish.

Catfish operations in the three major producing States had 325 million stockers on hand on July 1, 2020, up 10 percent from the July 1, 2019, total of 296 million stockers. The breakouts of stocker fish inventory numbers on July 1, 2020, with their respective change from the previous year were: large stockers, 148 million fish, down slightly; and small stockers, 177 million, up 20 percent from last year. Producers had 469 million fingerlings and fry on hand on July 1, 2020, down 8 percent from July 1, 2019.

Water Surface Acres Used for Production - Major States: 2019 and 2020

State	Water surface acres used for production July 1 - December 31	
	2019 (acres)	2020 (acres)
Alabama	16,900	15,800
Arkansas	4,700	3,900
Mississippi	36,300	35,100
3 State Total	57,900	54,800

Catfish Water Surface Acres by Use – Major States: 2019 and 2020

Year and state	Acres intended for utilization during July 1 - December 31 for					Acres taken out of production during January 1 - June 30
	Foodsize (acres)	Fingerlings (acres)	Broodfish (acres)	Currently under or scheduled for		
				Renovation (acres)	New construction (acres)	
2019						
Alabama	16,400	210	(D)	300	(D)	680
Arkansas	3,000	1,200	(D)	155	(D)	-
Mississippi	26,900	6,000	1,500	1,100	500	430
3 State total	46,300	7,410	1,740	1,555	820	1,110
2020						
Alabama	15,300	320	(D)	280	(D)	(D)
Arkansas	2,600	1,000	(D)	180	(D)	(D)
Mississippi	25,600	5,300	1,400	1,600	330	890
3 State total	43,500	6,620	1,525	2,060	380	1,595

- Represents zero.

(D) Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual operations.

Catfish Inventory by Size Category – Major States: July 1, 2019 and 2020

Size category and state	Fish		Live weight			
			Total		Average	
	2019 (1,000 fish)	2020 (1,000 fish)	2019 (1,000 pounds)	2020 (1,000 pounds)	2019 (pounds per fish)	2020 (pounds per fish)
Large foodsize						
Alabama	1,090	1,200	4,300	4,500	3.9	3.8
Arkansas	210	300	756	1,090	3.6	3.6
Mississippi	1,110	990	3,800	3,200	3.4	3.2
3 State total	2,410	2,490	8,856	8,790	3.7	3.5
Medium foodsize						
Alabama	13,900	11,300	26,900	22,200	1.9	2.0
Arkansas	2,000	2,230	3,800	4,350	1.9	2.0
Mississippi	15,100	12,800	27,900	24,100	1.8	1.9
3 State total	31,000	26,330	58,600	50,650	1.9	1.9
Small foodsize						
Alabama	25,000	25,300	24,800	25,200	1.0	1.0
Arkansas	4,520	3,910	4,500	3,950	1.0	1.0
Mississippi	47,700	47,500	45,700	47,500	1.0	1.0
3 State total	77,220	76,710	75,000	76,650	1.0	1.0
Total foodsize						
Alabama	39,990	37,800	56,000	51,900	(X)	(X)
Arkansas	6,730	6,440	9,056	9,390	(X)	(X)
Mississippi	63,910	61,290	77,400	74,800	(X)	(X)
3 State total	110,630	105,530	142,456	136,090	(X)	(X)
Broodfish						
Alabama	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Arkansas	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Mississippi	510	480	2,500	2,450	4.9	5.1
3 State total	730	515	3,393	2,607	4.6	5.1

See footnote(s) at end of table.

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Catfish Inventory by Size Category – Major States: July 1, 2019 and 2020 (continued)

Size category and state	Fish		Live weight			
			Total		Average	
	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020
	(1,000 fish)	(1,000 fish)	(1,000 pounds)	(1,000 pounds)	(pounds per 1,000 fish)	(pounds per 1,000 fish)
Large stockers						
Alabama	47,000	47,100	19,100	18,100	406	384
Arkansas	10,600	4,780	2,950	1,320	278	276
Mississippi	91,300	96,400	33,600	35,200	368	365
3 State total	148,900	148,280	55,650	54,620	374	368
Small stockers						
Alabama	61,900	62,100	5,650	5,950	91	96
Arkansas	5,640	4,550	495	468	88	103
Mississippi	79,700	110,000	8,450	12,000	106	109
3 State total	147,240	176,650	14,595	18,418	99	104
Total stockers						
Alabama	108,900	109,200	24,750	24,050	(X)	(X)
Arkansas	16,240	9,330	3,445	1,788	(X)	(X)
Mississippi	171,000	206,400	42,050	47,200	(X)	(X)
3 State total	296,140	324,930	70,245	73,038	(X)	(X)
Fingerlings and fry						
Alabama	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Arkansas	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Mississippi	444,000	410,000	6,350	7,550	14.3	18.4
3 State total	512,300	468,810	7,329	8,513	14.3	18.2

(D) Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual operations.

(X) Not applicable.

Terms and Definitions Used for Catfish Production Estimates

Broodfish: Fish kept for egg production, including males. Broodfish produce the fertilized eggs, which go to hatcheries. The most desirable size is 3 to 10 pounds or 4 to 6 years of age.

Fingerlings: Fish weighing 2 to 60 pounds per 1,000 fish or 2 to 6 inches in length.

Foodsize (large): Fish weighing over 3 pounds.

Foodsize (medium): Fish weighing over one and one-half pounds to 3 pounds.

Foodsize (small): Fish weighing over three-fourths of a pound to one and one-half pounds.

Fry: Fish weighing less than 2 pounds per 1,000 fish or less than 2 inches in length.

Stockers (large): Fish weighing over 180 pounds to 750 pounds per 1,000 fish.

Stockers (small): Fish weighing over 60 pounds to 180 pounds per 1,000 fish or over 6 inches in length.

Statistical Methodology

Survey Procedures: All known catfish producers in the three published states are surveyed to collect production data. Individual NASS regional field offices maintain a list of all known catfish producers and use known sources of producers to update their lists. Operators are mailed a questionnaire as close as possible to July 1 and given time to respond by mail. Those that do not respond by mail are telephoned or possibly enumerated in person during the middle of July.

Estimating Procedures: Sound statistical methodology is employed to derive the estimates from reported data. All data are analyzed for unusual values. Data from each operation are compared to their own past operating profile and to trends from similar operations. Missing data for large operations are estimated based on similar operations or historical data. Summary expansions account for the remaining non-response operations. NASS regional field offices prepare these estimates by using a combination of survey indications and historic trends. Individual State estimates are reviewed by the Agricultural Statistics Board for reasonableness.

Revision policy: Estimates for the previous year are subject to revision when current estimates are made. Revisions are the result of late or corrected data. Due to sequestration, NASS did not produce July catfish production estimates in 2013.

Reliability: In the three published states, catfish production estimates are based on a census of all known active producers and therefore, have no sampling variability. However, estimates are subject to errors such as omissions, duplication, and mistakes in reporting, recording, and processing the data. While these errors cannot be measured directly, they are minimized through strict quality controls in the data collection process and a careful review of all reported data for consistency and reasonableness.

Information Contacts

Listed below are the commodity specialists in the Livestock Branch of the National Agricultural Statistics Service to contact for additional information. E-mail inquiries may be sent to nass@usda.gov

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- Cornell’s Mann Library has launched a new website housing NASS’s and other agency’s archived reports. The new website, <https://usda.library.cornell.edu>. All email subscriptions containing reports will be sent from the new website, <https://usda.library.cornell.edu>. To continue receiving the reports via e-mail, you will have to go to the new website, create a new account and re-subscribe to the reports. If you need instructions to set up an account or subscribe, they are located at: <https://usda.library.cornell.edu/help>. You should whitelist notifications@usda-esmis.library.cornell.edu in your email client to avoid the emails going into spam/junk folders.

For more information on NASS surveys and reports, call the NASS Agricultural Statistics Hotline at (800) 727-9540, 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. ET, or e-mail: nass@usda.gov.

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